

## **"How to Survive the Last Days," Part 1 - 1 Corinthians 16:13-14 – May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016**

- Today's teaching will be part one of a series I've titled, "How to Survive the Last Days."
- As we reach the end of Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth there's more than just normal and nebulous closing comments.
- By that I mean, this is not what one would normally expect at the end of a letter, rather, it's packed with a most powerful punch.
- True to form the Apostle Paul provides a powerful exhortations at the end of this epistle and it has to do with what they're to do.
- More specifically as it relates to what the Corinthians are to do in order to not only survive but even thrive in these the last days.
- Enter our text today and the practical ways in which we can remain steadfast, in a world waxing more and more evil by the day.

### **1. Be on guard (Verse 13a)**

- Here in the first part of verse thirteen Paul simply says to be on guard, or as some translations render it, watch, as a watchman.
- The idea is to constantly be on guard on watch as it were for what I believe are two reasons one of which is the enemy's attack.
- The second is to constantly be on watch for the Lord's return, and carries with it the idea of being the "watchman on the wall."

Ez 3:16–21 Now it came to pass at the end of seven days that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, 17 "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: 18 When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. 19 Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. 20 "Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. 21 Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."

### **2. Stand firm in the faith (Verse 13b)**

- Here in the second part of verse thirteen Paul exhorts us to stand firm in the faith, which carries with it the idea of not giving up.
- In other words, don't give in by giving up ground; instead, stand your ground firmly by faith and in faith. Never ever ever give up.
- Truth be made known, the scriptures are replete with exhortations to stand firm in the Lord, no matter what comes against us.

In Colossians 1:23 Paul says to the church in Colossia that he wants to present them to be holy, blameless and above reproach, "...if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister."

1 Peter 5:8–9 (NIV) — 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) — 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

### **3. Be courageous and strong (Verse 13c)**

- Here in the last part of verse thirteen, Paul says, "be courageous; be strong," or as another translation renders it, "be brave."
- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is the meaning of what he says in the original Greek language.
- It's interesting to note that this is the only place in the New Testament where the word translated be brave is used, andrizomai.
- This Greek word literally means, "to act like a man," or as we would say today, "man up!" Paul is telling them to act like a man!
- The fact of the matter is that to be a man requires that a man be strong, and courageous in the face of opposition and adversity.
- However, we are not to be strong in and of ourselves, rather, we are to be strong in the Lord and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 6:10 (NIV) — 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Zechariah 4:6 (NKJV) — 6 So he answered and said to me: "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

Adam Clarke, of verse thirteen, had this to say, "The terms in this verse are all military: Watch ye, watch, and be continually on your guard, lest you be surprised by your enemies ... Stand fast in the faith—Keep in your ranks; do not be disorderly; be determined to keep your ranks unbroken; keep close together ... Quit yourselves like men—When you are attacked, do not flinch; maintain your ground; resist; press forward; strike home; keep compact; conquer ... Be strong—if one company or division be opposed by too great a force of the enemy, strengthen that division, and maintain your position ... summon up all your courage, sustain each other; fear not, for fear will enervate you."

### **4. Do everything in love (Verse 14)**

14 Do everything in love.

- Here in verse fourteen the Apostle Paul seemingly wraps everything he's said up to this point by saying, "do everything in love."
- In other words, all of ur watching, standing firm, courage and strength, is to be done with love, and I'll add humility, at the core.
- I would submit, in closing, that love and humility are identical twins, if you will, such that they're identical in the life of a believer.